

***NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE WESTERN REGION SUPPLEMENT 13-2003
APPLICABLE TO NWSI 10-16
April 1, 2013***

***Operations and Services
Performance, NWSPD 10-16
Significant Event Reporting, NWSI 10-1603***

***NOTIFICATION OF SIGNIFICANT WEATHER/FLOOD-RELATED AND
EMERGENCY EVENTS AND REQUIREMENTS FOR WRITTEN REPORTS***

NOTICE: This publication contains personal contact information. Posting is limited to internal agency access. This publication can be found at <https://sites.google.com/a/noaa.gov/nws-wr-roc/home>

OPR: W/WR1x1 (L. Wanek)
Type of Issuance: Routine

Certified by: W/WR1 (J. Zimmerman)

SUMMARY OF REVISIONS: This directive supersedes NWS Western Region Supplement 13-2003, dated February 19, 2010.

The following changes were made in this issuance:

1. The distinction between immediate reporting and next business day reporting has been eliminated.
2. A Definitions Section has been added.
3. The reporting tool referenced in the supplement replaces the requirement for the field office to complete a "For The Record" memo.

Signed
Vickie Nadolski
Director, Western Region

03/18/13

Date

Table of Contents: Page

1. Description.....	2
2. Procedures and Responsibilities	2
2.1 Purpose.....	2
2.2 Timeliness and Content of Report to WRH.....	2
3. High Impact Event Reports.....	3
3.1 Definitions.....	3
3.1.1 Significant Damage.....	3
3.1.2 Major Public Infrastructure Impacts	3
3.1.3 Widespread Media Coverage	3
3.2 Reporting.....	4
4. Significant Events Requiring Phone Notification to the ROC.....	6
5. Daily Situational Reports.....	7

Appendix

A. Regional Contact.....	A-1
B. Sample Daily Situation Report.....	B-1

1. Description: This supplement defines responsibility for reporting of significant weather/flood related and emergency events to the NOAA National Weather Service (NWS) Western Region Headquarters (WRH). It is imperative in the event of certain weather/flood related events or emergencies described below that information flows quickly and accurately to all interested NWS parties.

2. Procedures and Responsibilities.

2.1 Purpose: It is the responsibility of WRH to inform National Weather Service Headquarters (NWSH) of significant weather/flood events or emergencies. The method chosen to inform NWSH will depend upon the magnitude and time criticality of the event. The reports are used to inform Congressional staffers, cabinet level staff, Department of Homeland Security including FEMA, NOAA management and the national media. This information is also a key component of inter-agency coordination that occurs during major events.

2.2 Timeliness and Content of Report to WRH: All reporting of information to WRH will be sent to the Western Region Regional Operational Center (WR ROC). The criteria identified in Sections 3 and 4 of this supplement will be used to determine whether to report significant weather/flood events or emergency information to WRH. The warning program is of primary importance and notification of significant events should be made as soon as higher priority warning activity permits.

3. High Impact Event Reports: High Impact Event Reports will be generated by WR field offices when a significant hydrometeorological or other event, specified by certain criteria identified in Table 1, occurs within their area of responsibility. Significant events include those that result in death, significant damage (e.g., agriculture, property, utilities), significant public/partner response (i.e., evacuation), impacts to major public infrastructure (e.g., US highways and interstates), or NWS infrastructure and/or personnel. For long fused events, such as wildfires, offices can use NWS Chat messaging and/or email to update the ROC. Additional High Impact Event Reports are not needed.

3.1 Definitions: Many of the reporting criteria use subjective terms such as “significant damage” and “widespread media coverage.” What is significant in one part of the Region may not be significant in another part of the Region. While definitions for these terms will be provided below, judgment of the reporting official is also important.

3.1.1 Significant Damage: In the context of reports, significant damage refers to at least one of the following:

- more than superficial damage to a well-known structure
- more than superficial damage to numerous homes or other substantial buildings
- natural damage on a large scale (e.g., several square miles of a forest flattened, or thousands of acres of crops destroyed)

3.1.2 Major Public Infrastructure Impacts: In the context of reports, major public infrastructure impacts refer to at least one of the following:

- Communication
 - power outage affecting thousands of customers
 - telephone outage affecting thousands of customers (e.g., 911 outage)
 - communications tower suffers heavy damage or is toppled
- Transportation
 - major highway(s) closed
 - airport closures or numerous airport arrival/departures delays and/or flight diversions
- Commerce
 - numerous offices, stores, and/or government facilities closed or evacuated
 - community evacuated

3.1.3 Widespread Media Coverage: Refers to a single event such as a fatality or accident and not ongoing coverage of an active weather period. In the context of reports, widespread media coverage refers to at least one of the following:

- the event is reported in a “headline” newscast by a national broadcast or cable news network (e.g., the top-of-the-hour radio news)
- the event receives recurring coverage by a national broadcast or cable news network
- local broadcast media cover the event beyond normal news broadcast times (i.e., breaking into/replacing scheduled programming)

When deciding whether or not to file a report, the extent of media coverage would come into play only if none of the other criteria are met. Normally, significant hydrometeorological or non-weather events will be covered by the media if deaths, injuries, and/or significant damage occur.

3.2 **Reporting:** The field office will submit their report via the Google docs form (<https://docs.google.com/a/noaa.gov/spreadsheet/viewform?formkey=dDIxbi1leWtvQWk4Zm8zZEZnRTBodXc6MQ#gid=0>) which sends an automatic email to wr-roc@noaa.gov. Upon receipt of this report, the ROC Duty Officer (DO) will gather additional information, if necessary, and notify the NWS Operations Center (NWSOC).

Table 1. Significant Events which require field offices to complete the reporting form

Field Office Actions	
Hydrometeorological Event	Action(s) Required
Hydrometeorological event, including lightning with any of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • significant damage • one or more fatalities caused by adverse weather, unless otherwise described below • major infrastructure impacts 	Complete NWS WR Reporting Form
Extreme Heat or Cold event with any of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • five or more fatalities • significant damage • major infrastructure impacts • widespread media attention 	Complete NWS WR Reporting Form
Multi-Vehicle Accident and/or Numerous Individual Accidents , which occur in close proximity to one another, caused by high impact weather events (e.g. dust, blizzard, dense fog, freezing rain, etc) with any of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • significant damage • one or more fatalities • major infrastructure impacts 	Complete NWS WR Reporting Form
Debris Flow Flooding (e.g. rockslides, landslides, mudslides) causing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • significant damage • one or more fatalities • major infrastructure impacts 	Complete NWS WR Reporting Form

Aviation- or Marine-related Events	Action(s) Required
Aviation Accident/Incident with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • one or more fatalities and weather is suspected to be a factor • military accidents should be limited to those cases where sufficient information is available and the accident is known to have resulted in civilian deaths or significant property damage and/or damage survey conducted. 	Complete NWS WR Reporting Form
En-route aviation incident , the appropriate CWSU will be the lead on reporting any en-route aviation incident clue to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Severe turbulence events that cause injury to passengers or crew, or damage to aircraft • Volcanic Ash encounters • Other weather conditions encountered where emergency procedures were implemented • Any weather related incident that is expected to receive widespread media attention 	Complete NWS WR Reporting Form
Marine/Surf Accident or Incident where marine weather is a factor resulting in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • one or more fatalities and/or missing at sea (e.g. person washed off rocks or subdued by wave) • loss of, or major damage to, vessels > 40 feet in length (e.g. collision or vessel grounding resulting in hull rupture) 	Complete NWS WR Reporting Form
Other Environmental Event	Action(s) Required
Tsunami event with any of the following caused by the tsunami wave: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • significant damage • one or more fatalities • major infrastructure impacts 	Send summary to the ROC within 24 hours of event
Volcano event with any of the following resulting from volcanic ash, lahar, or other side effects of the eruption: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • significant damage • one or more fatalities • major infrastructure impacts • WFO issues Ashfall Advisory (NPW) • WFO issues Flash Flood Warning/Watch for lahar 	Complete NWS WR Reporting Form
Wildfire with any of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • significant damage • one or more fatalities • major infrastructure impacts 	Complete NWS WR Reporting Form

• widespread media attention	
Hazardous Materials (HAZMAT) Incident (an unplanned incident resulting in fuel or oil spill, hazardous chemical release, etc) requiring WFO DSS (e.g. spot forecasts, telephone briefings, hysplit output, and/or IMET deployment) which results in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • significant damage • one or more fatalities • major infrastructure impacts • widespread media attention 	Complete NWS WR Reporting Form
Failure or Potential Failure of Hydrologic Structures (e.g. dams, levees, etc) that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pose a threat to life and/or property (i.e. no stock ponds or beaver dams) • significant damage • one or more fatalities • major infrastructure impacts 	Complete NWS WR Reporting Form
Space Weather Event resulting in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • significant public or partner service disruption to infrastructure (e.g. communication, power, transportation) 	Complete NWS WR Reporting Form
Event Impacting NWS Operations and/or Staff	Action(s) Required
Any <i>event</i> that results in one or more of the following (<i>refer to NWSI 10-2204 for additional reporting requirements</i>): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • one or more employee fatalities or serious injuries occurring in the line of duty • major damage to an NWS facility and/or property • major damage to multiple employee(s) homes or property • employee(s) unaccounted for • civil disturbance affecting NWS employees or installations • evacuation of an NWS facility • loss of communications, either during a warning event or lasting three hours or more, which impacts an office's ability to issue/deliver products and services 	Immediate telephone notification to ROC then complete NWS WR Reporting Form
Inadvertent Product Issuance/Broadcast A Warning that triggers the emergency alert system (EAS) is inadvertently issued and/or broadcast.	Complete NWS WR Reporting Form

4. Significant Events Requiring Phone Notification to the ROC: Some events simply require immediate notification to the WR ROC. These events are defined in Table 2. Contact information for the WR ROC is defined in Appendix A.

Table 2. Significant Events which require field offices to simply notify the WR ROC

Field Office Actions	Notification method
Tsunami watch, warning, advisory issued for anywhere along the west coast (WA/OR/CA).	Immediate telephone notification from impacted coastal offices to ROC
Volcano event with any of the following: • Volcanic Ash Advisory Center (VAAC) issues Watch, Warning, Advisory for CONUS Office	Immediate telephone notification by phone from State Liaison Office (SLO) to ROC
Any event which requires an unscheduled service backup implementation	Immediate telephone notification from office performing the backup when backup is initiated
Local office conducts a damage survey	Email or chat message ¹ sent by office
Sudden incident-driven requests for weather support from responding agencies including live/virtual EOC support	Immediate telephone notification from office performing support to ROC

5. WR Daily Situational Reports: Anticipatory reports from the WR ROC to the NWSOC have been superseded by Daily Situational Reports created by the WR ROC. Daily Situational Reports include an overview, potential and observed impacts, forecast confidence, and DSS provided by WR offices. The WR ROC will gather information for the Daily Situation Report from field DSS activities, social media, existing products, and the WR ROC chat room. When further detail or clarification is needed, the WR ROC will contact the impacted WFO/RFC/CWSU for additional information.

WR ROC will send the Daily Situational Report to the NWSOC by close of business to allow the NWSOC staff to begin incorporating WR information into their briefing for the following morning. WR Situational Reports are sent to the NWS.OpsCenter@noaa.gov email list. The subject line is WR Situational Report - Month Day Year. An example of the Daily Situation Report can be found in Appendix B.

¹ The WR ROC Chatroom is monitored by the ROC Duty Officer during normal business hours. While the chat room is available 24x7 for WR field personnel to communicate with each other, chats directed to the ROC during the night or on weekends may not be responded to in a timely manner.

APPENDIX A - Regional Contact

For all significant weather/flood events, emergencies, and anticipated high impact events WFOs/RFCs/CWSUs should contact the WR ROC.

Contact information:

- a. Email: wr-roc@noaa.gov
- b. Phone: (801) 524-7907. Phone will call forward to appropriate staff contact. If no answer, leave a message and the call will be returned by the ROC DO promptly.
- c. NWSSchat: Via the wr-roc chat room.

Appendix B – Sample Daily Situation Report

Overview:

High pressure continues over the Western CONUS resulting in very cold temperatures and wind chills throughout many interior valley locations with strong valley inversions and valley fog commonplace. This high will remain over much of the west into the weekend.

Along coastal WA and OR, a weakening transitory weather system will bring a threat of freezing rain through early Friday, focused primarily on the Columbia River Gorge and the upper Hood River Valley.

Models now indicate the next Pacific low will encroach upon the Pacific Northwest and northern CA this weekend, gradually pushing the high pressure eastward, potentially bringing an end to the strong valley inversions and fog.

Washington/Oregon/Idaho

- Snow covered and icy roads will continue with very cold temperatures.
- Very cold temperatures and a little wind will combine to produce wind chill readings as low as 30 degrees below zero raising the threat of hypothermia.
- Areas of fog and freezing fog may cause difficult driving conditions.
- Cold air trapped below valley inversions will result in poor air quality.
- Freezing rain in coastal WA and OR may cause icy roadways and bridges.

California/Nevada/Arizona

- Wind chills over central NV will be -20 to -34 with danger to exposed skin, vegetations, and livestock.
- Cold temperatures in areas of southern CA with sensitive vegetation may result in damage to crops.
- Snow from a storm system East of the region will extend back across extreme Southeast Arizona resulting in 2-5 inches above 5000 ft.

Utah

- Strong inversions will continue through the end of the week leading to poor air quality as well as valley fog and possible freezing fog.
- Temperatures will remain cold with snow covered and icy roads in higher elevations.

Montana

- Very cold temperatures will continue with single digits to low teens.
- Strong inversions will continue with poor air quality and fog lasting through Friday.

NWS Operations:

- Offices are issuing weather stories to highlight the windy conditions, cold temps, wind chills, valley inversions, fog, freezing fog, freezing rain, and poor air quality.

Strong Valley Inversions This Week



Impacts

- Air pollution trapped in valleys
- Valley freezing fog and haze
- Reduced visibility
- Light Winds
- Valley Highs - Upper 20s to Mid 30s
- Mountain Highs - 40s to near 50

Washoe County Air Quality Information:

- Reno-Sparks wood burning restrictions
- www.ourcleanair.com
- 775-785-4110

Photo: View of Reno from NWS Office Thu, Jan 3rd 2013



Issued Thursday, Jan 3, 2013 at 1:35 pm PST

National Weather Service - Reno, NV

